



Oklahoma State Department of Health
Creating a State of Health

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Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) Career Ladder Training

The Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) is glad to announce a new program to fund training for certified nurse aides (CNAs) that will enable CNAs to advance their knowledge and skills. State health officials believe the new training, CNA II, could ultimately result in improved quality of care provided to patients in many long-term health care facilities.

To fund the program, the OSDH is using civil monetary penalties (CMPs) collected by the agency from nursing homes that have been fined for delivering substandard care. CNAs who work with long-term care patients in nursing homes and skilled nursing facilities are eligible to apply for the OSDH-funded training.

The OSDH has established contracts with the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education and Tulsa Community College to offer a special 30-hour training curriculum that CNAs can use to build their skill sets and fill in gaps not offered in the basic CNA course curriculum. Oklahoma's Career Tech system, which includes 29 technology centers on 56 campuses, has the potential of providing accessible training on a statewide basis. Tulsa Community College training will be offered at the Tulsa campus.

The course includes 11 modules that focus on safety, teamwork, aging and illness, communication, nutrition, spirituality and dying, quality of life, dementia care, importance of family, culture change and restorative care. Each module is three hours and the total course is five full days of training. The OSDH believes the course will assist in building a "career ladder" for CNAs so they can be certified at different levels related to their training. Oklahoma currently has about 66,000 individuals certified or entitled to renew as long-term care aides on the CNA Registry who are qualified to receive this training.

To be eligible to apply for the free tuition and fee waiver for the course, CNAs must have worked in a facility for six months and their administrator must submit a letter of recommendation to Career Tech or Tulsa Community College.

The OSDH has earmarked \$371,000 for the project in state fiscal year 2010, which will provide training for about 900 to 1,000 CNAs.

For more information about the CNA training, contact Jim Buck, Assistant Chief for OSDH Long-Term Care Services, (405) 271-6868, or email Jim at jimob@health.ok.gov.